SYT-CROSSIN

Memoranda

Sydney Island
8 July 1968

R. S. Crossin

Party of Crossin, Clapp and Beckman land at 0915. Ship's longboat towed the loaded raft up to the channel on the west side — no engine, luckily no surf. This is the last landing I make with no engine on the raft.

The buildings are mainly falling apart. Water catch building is in fine form being of concrete and corrugated roofing (asbestos) and is full of water at this time.

8 July

Collecting activities

Field# 50181 Anous stolidus

brood patch on right just defeathering
left brood patch still feathered.
Cloaca appears as if egg was
recently laid— no molt - all fresh
plumage. taken on west point
of island near village.

Bird flew from nest ca. 25 ft.
up in palm tree - H thought I
heard a small young call from
nest after I shot adult, but
brood patch etc. indicates
fresh egg - ??

50182 Sterna lunata - brood patches bare no molt
50183 " " " b.p. just finishing defeathering no molt
50184 " " " " " no molt "
50185 " " " " " no molt "

above 4 S. lunata shot from small
colony of ca. 10 on offshore islet on
SE end of East. Lagoon. Probably

with eggs. larger colonies 7 gray backs and Sooties to W. on another offshore islet (Roger banging away there at 1300).

50186 Sterna lunata B patches just finishing defeathering. flying along S lagoon shore.

50187 Golden Plover, body molt just coming into breeding plumage

50188 Wandering tattler, no molt, breeding plumage.

50189 Fairy Tern Mother sitting on egg ca. 5 days incub ~~ab~~ ab 25 ft dead palm stub in ~~S~~ palm grove. 9 July

50190 - 50192 Gygis alba.
ad three taken between village and ent. lagoon. 190 no molt b/p feathered
191 no molt b/p feathered
192 no molt, b/p bare - despite nearly pure black bill

collecting 9 July

30193 Sterna hirundo. no molt, bp bare.
west end of Lagoon; with
other birds

8 July

Palm trees thin out as one goes E along the south side. Scaevola becomes more and more dense until one is forced to walk along the beach. Messerschmidia becomes more prominent inland as Palms thin out. No shore birds along the whole south beach. Messerschmidia becomes prominent plant inland to central lagoon, few Scaevola intermixed. In most places very dense messes. Island composed primarily of coral rubble.

At south end of lagoon a long stand of Cordia ca. 25' high runs along lagoon shore for ca. 200 yds.

9 July

Palm trees thin out going
west of village and
entire area between lagoon
and outward beach is
a dense stand of Messer.
and Scaevola.

8 July

Lesser Frigatebird

2 over village - high
One ad ♂, 1 ad. ♀, almost
surely Lesser F.

9 July

General unmature
birds seen over lagoon, but
identity to this species is
uncertain.

8 July

Shorebirds

Ruddy Turnstone 1 SE end of central lagoon.

2 more seen. (1 on 9 July lagoon.)

Wandering Tattler, 2 on S end of ~~bot~~ lagoon, one collected., 3 more camo about

Golden Plover 3 seen, 1 collected, 1 of colld and 1 other in intermediate plumage, third appeared to have full black breast = breeding plumage. (7 on 9 July lagoon)

Bristle-thighed Curlew one seen over lagoon.

8 July

New Zealand Cuckoo

One flushed from a palm tree on south side near the E end of palm grove. too far out for a shot, and then landed briefly atop messerschmidia and flipped into dense seaweed and could not be induced to show again. NO questions about identity.

9 July

spent considerable time last night at the point of initial flushing and also today at various points between village and point of original sighting but did not see the bird again.

8 July

Avonus Stotidus

2 (at rest) on west point
at least 4 more E along
south beach to end of
palms.

8 July

Bygis alba

2 or west point flying over palms.
2 more going E along south beach to end of palms.

9 July

collected 3 of 3 between village and lagoon, about where I shot one of yesterday. two of the three today had the usual blue beaks with brood patches feathered - the remaining bird had bare brood patches, but the beak was nearly solid black - blue only at the very base.

8 July

Sterna Fuscata

several hundred flying inland and out seaward across west point near village, most birds singles or pairs. As one proceeds E along the south beach, birds become more and more dense. Along the south end hundreds were coming and going from a colony somewhere probably in the central lagoon area.

In the village I counted 518 in 16 minutes pouring in from seaward toward lagoon. ≠ 1530 - 1546

A young bird practically all dark was observed flying toward an adult and giving the juvenile call.

8 July

Sterna fuscata cont.

an immature still about 70 % black on the ventral flew over S W end alone.

9 July

practically no sooties flying in over the lagoon area from 0630 to 0830.

Small groups began coming in after 0830, but there does not seem to be any-where near the numbers of yesterday. They are most definitely not breeding as yet. Their main interest now appears to be a few offshore islets in the central lagoon on the NE side, about where Noddy

9 Italy cont.

So Sty Terra.

Colony is now positioned. I doubt if when they do decide to nest, it will be there. more likely some portion of the main island in fairly dense Scaevola or messer. will be selected. There is no way of knowing how big the colony will be. Several thousand birds are loafing around the island now in this pre-breeding buildup, but as yet no social bonds have started.

$95 \times \frac{20}{19}$

950
450

1900

GSA-U.S. GOV'T

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